

Viplavaḥ

Revolution Through Education
A Journal of the ISKCON Ministry of Education

Dedicated to ISKCON Founder Acharya: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

December 2019



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VISION STATEMENT

To provide Krishna conscious education of high quality to everyone through temples, educational institutions and various global initiatives.

MISSION STATEMENT

To develop comprehensive educational systems globally, that foster higher spiritual values, fulfil the needs of ISKCON members and the larger society bringing about excellence in all areas of human life. We aim to fulfil this mission by

1. Empowering and supporting educational initiatives and collaborations among educators, educational institutions and professionals
2. Establishing and monitoring high standards of Vaisnava education
3. Supervising the development and execution of educational plans and ensuring they are delivered to high standards and
4. Understanding and fulfilling the educational needs of the Krishna conscious families
5. Making every temple as an educational centre and a centre of excellence.

MASTHEAD

Viplavah is a Journal of the Ministry of Education of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder Acharya His Divine Grace Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

Minister of Education: H. G. Sesa Dasa

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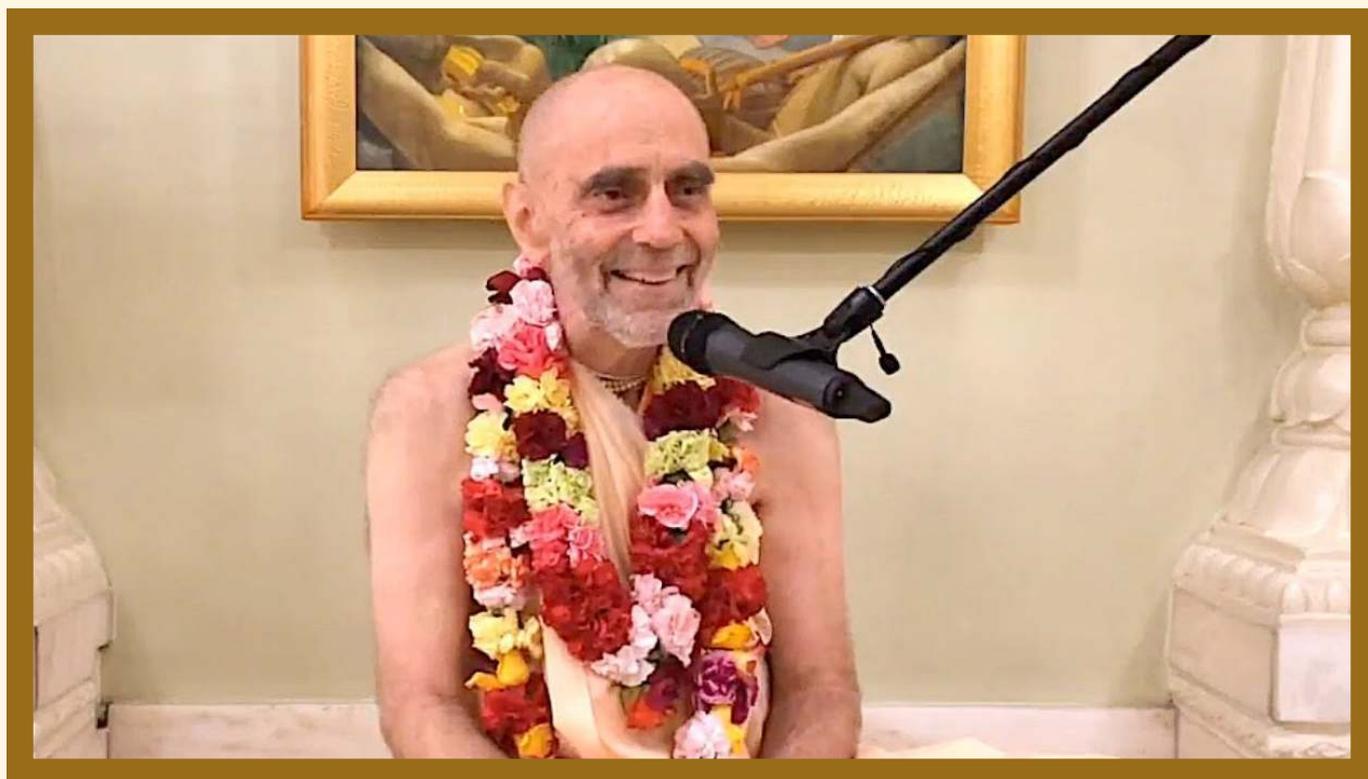
- H. G. Indira-sakhi Devi Dasi
- H. G. Ramgiridhari Dasa
-

The first issue of the Journal was published Janmastami 2017 with plans to publish four issues each year. It is driven out of North American and the Western Hemisphere but is aimed at serving the educational needs of ISKCON globally. We hope it inspires many regional and topical journals, such as Jayam which is now being published in Spanish.

Every effort has been made to eliminate grammatical and spelling mistakes from this Viplavah, but especially since it is a periodical and has to be published by a certain deadline it is almost impossible to eliminate them all. Please help us.

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*Hanumatpresaka Swami (Prof. Huber H. Robinson) – ISKCON Ministry of Education,
Ricardo Palma University (Lima, Peru)*

This is our first issue of Viplavah working with an Acting Editor, His Grace Ramgiridhari Das. Next issue will be with Her Grace Indira-sakhi Devi Dasi, and so forth for one year. Then we will retire, consolidate and leave our body!

We have been very slow in releasing this issue on time. I hope we can improve that and have more interaction amongst the Editors, Writers and Designers. There is so much potency and potential in this journal. It can lead ISKCON to its next level of service.

Let us conclude with a criticism that we remember from the Nobel Laureate in literature, Albert Camus that unless you rewrite six times, you are a coward.

All Glories to Srila Prabhupada. Please accept our humble obeisances.
Hanumatpresaka Swami



By Ramgiridhari Dasa, Executive Member - ISKCON Ministry of Education

Welcome to Viplavah December 2019 issue. This is the 4th and last issue of this year 2019. Currently all over the world devotees are busy in Brihad- Mrdanga Harinam Sankirtan, distributing transcendental literatures.

Srila Prabhupada had established this Krishna Consciousness movement as an Education Institution where we teach how to lead a Krishna Conscious way of life and just not limit Krishna consciousness to a portion of our daily routine.

In Srimad Bhagavatam 4.12.23 purport, Srila Prabhupada says, "...Any five-year-old child can be trained, and within a very short time his life will become successful by realization of Krishna consciousness. Unfortunately, this training is lacking all over the world. It is necessary for the leaders of the Krishna consciousness movement to start educational institutions in different parts of the world to train children, starting at the age of five years. Thus such children will not become hippies or spoiled children of society; rather, they can all become devotees of the Lord. The face of the world will then change automatically."

In this issue of Viplavah we are discussing about Education & Sankirtan with a focus of training our children in Krishna Conscious education. We have covered few projects and realizations from devotees who are spearheading these initiatives. Material education mainly focuses on skills development and character development is completely compromised. Sesa Prabhu's article on "Gita Values" gives a wonderful perspective about the basis on which one can build a relationship with the Supreme, all living beings and the environment.

We have an article from Goswami Academy, a Krishna Conscious school from Houston, articles from ISKCON Chennai and ISKCON Bahrain all of them trying to help & train children and youths for leading a Krishna Conscious way of life, as per the directive of Srila Prabhupada. We have also included an article on School Standards, a project our core team members are working on to help our own institutions to set up standards.

A team of devotees from Board of Examinations (BoEx) along with few other devotees involved in Sastric Education are working together to offer more standardised & systematic learning. A report on this initiative is also published. All these educational initiatives are meant to help our children / youths to learn Krishna consciousness systematically & scientifically. Many more such initiatives are needed to help children take up devotional way of living. Srila Prabhupada has written about his personal desire and the importance of taking care of the children & has given clear directive.

'It is the duty of every living being to perform welfare activities for the benefit of others with his life, wealth, intelligence and words.' Cc.Adi.9.42

Param Vijayate Sri Krishna Sankirtanam!!!

June 20, 1972

My Dear Stoka Krishna,

Please accept my blessings. I am in due receipt of your letter from Dallas dated June 14, 1972, and I have noted the contents carefully....

...I have indicated in my previous letter of several days back some hints for giving Krishna Consciousness children their proper education. I consider this Gurukul school to be one of our most important aspects of this movement and it should be given all serious consideration by the members. If we are able to make a whole generation of our children into fine Krishna Conscious preachers, that will be the glory of our movement and the glory of your country as well. But if we neglect somehow or other and if we lose even one Vaisnava, that is very great loss....

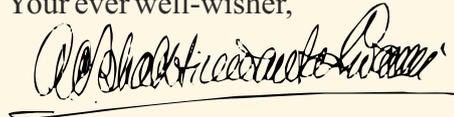
The children should be allowed to eat as much as they like, therefore if children are complaining from hunger we must feed them.

On the second point, if someone is coming to our school for the first time, still, they must eat what we are eating, namely Krishna prasadam. Yes, everything should be prepared for the pleasure of the Lord, without any other consideration. Our policy is that the children should be so trained that they will enjoy performing austerities, it is not that we shall spoil them at young age by indulging them in sense gratification. If there is obedience then there will be discipline, and without any discipline the management is very difficult. So first obedience by the children. That is not always by punishing or by force, but sometimes by showing the stick, without necessarily hitting and sometimes it is learning how to trick them or even cheat them into obeying you voluntarily and enjoying by their obedience. If there is difficulty for taking the smaller children on public sankirtan, there is no need. Unless they are behaving, what is the use of taking them into public? The smaller children can have their sankirtan party within the school grounds daily and they will enjoy as much. The main point is that these children may be given the two-fold program of education in Krishna Consciousness, namely, chanting and performing devotional activities on the one hand, and some knowledge of our philosophy and other subjects of knowledge on the other hand.

...We may thin the milk till it becomes useless, or we may boil it until it becomes thick and sweet, so now we have got enough followers, let us train them up perfectly in the philosophy and activities of Krishna Consciousness way of life. Unless all of my students become very much fixed up in their spiritual progress, what is the use of so many programs for expansion? So you are the leader at Dallas, now it is your task to become very, very responsible for the spiritual well being of all of the students there, so Krishna will give you all intelligence and facilities to serve Him nicely if you are very much sincere to do so. This will please me very much.

Hoping this will meet you in good health,

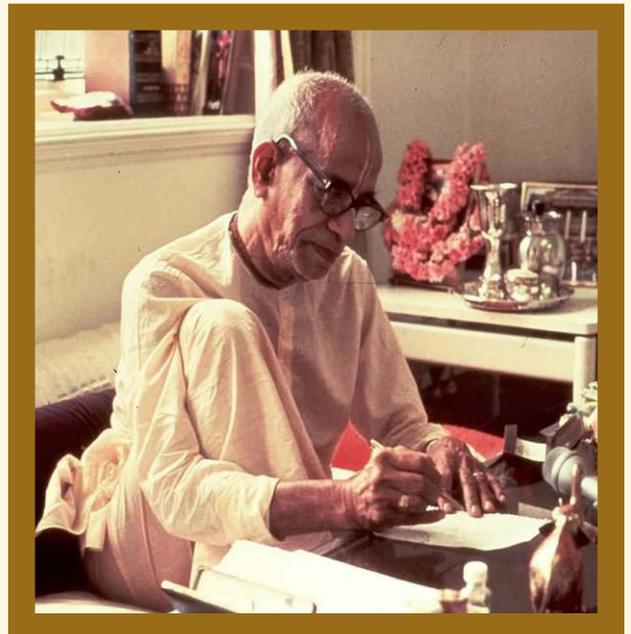
Your ever well-wisher,

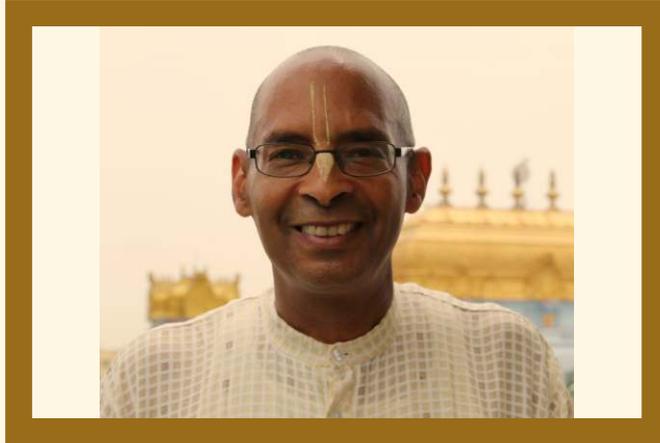


[signed]

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

Stoka Krsna das Adhikari c/o ISKCON Gurukula, Dallas





By Sesa Dasa, GBC & Minister - ISKCON's Ministry of Education

Thousands of years ago two friends, Krishna, the Supreme Lord, and Prince Arjuna spoke about life's most relevant questions. The setting was a battlefield, the issues urgent, and the resulting text, the Bhagavad-gita, The Song of God, has become an important contribution to the philosophical and spiritual literature of the world.

The six values presented here are selected because they help us understand the world view that forms the basis of Krishna's advice to Arjuna. We can use them to better our vision, our deeds, and our character. These Gita values are governed by Bhakti, a word that means "to share" which is always used in relation to the Supreme. They can thus help us discern what we can do to develop our relationship with the Supreme, all living beings, and the environment in which we live.

The Values: Sama Darshana (equal vision)

The Gita's idea of equal vision speaks of the equality of all living beings, where life is respected regardless of race, gender, caste, creed, or species. This rests on the understanding that the energy we call life is not a temporary material energy but an eternal spiritual energy. Thus Krishna says that the wise see a saint, a labourer, a dog and an elephant with equal vision, and while acknowledging their material differences sees real substance in their spiritual equality. This vision awards personhood to all, links everyone with God, and consequently with each other. It does not consider human dignity to be the natural basis of civilisations, but instead the dignity of all life.

Icchā (choice)

Icchā means desire. The Gita begins by Arjuna making a choice to seek guidance from his friend Krishna. Krishna concludes his Gita by recognising that after offering his opinion Arjuna will do as Arjuna desires. Krishna has spoken to Arjuna openly, truthfully, and with affection. He has not been demanding or dogmatic. By leaving the choice to Arjuna, Krishna has acknowledged this freedom. Thus Arjuna can freely choose his relationship with Krishna, his service and responsibilities, and fight or flight on the battlefield. The Gita establishes that love depends on individual choice.



Ahimsa (without harm)



Ahimsa means to act in a way that causes the least harm. In the Mahabharata Krishna says that all dharma, all good acts, are dependent on this one principle. The context of the Gita, a battlefield, helps us appreciate that ahimsa does not mean pacifism. Nevertheless, a life of ahimsa does include avoiding violence, the harm of offering cruel words, of making other's lives distressed or confused, of withholding knowledge or insight, and of being neglectful of ourselves. In the Gita Krishna asks us to consider loka sangraha – the welfare of the world, and sarva-bhuta-hita –the welfare of all beings. Ahimsa encourages such a life dedicated to truth, dharma, and spirituality, allowing us to be better servants of God and the greater good.

Acharya (teaching by example)



The word acharya means one who leads and teaches by example. The Acharya, by behaviour, shows what can be done; how we can live a full life with a minimum of possessions; how a dedicated life of service gladdens the heart; and how a spiritual life is a practical life.

The Acharyas inspire integrity and good character in others by the standards they set. Teaching by example is the essence of education. Leading by example is the essence of government. Exemplifying ones principles is the basis of dignity, respect, and trust.

Amānitva (humility)



Humility in the Gita is a virtue which is seen in behaviour but which rests on understanding. Humility is the quality of not being anxious to be honoured by others. Humility aided Arjuna to understand himself and what he must do in the greater scheme of things. Humility is not weak. It nurtured Arjuna's self-esteem, self-confidence, and courage. It allowed him to know, love, and serve God. It perfumes our communication, is the jewel of the broadminded, and is the key to a spiritual life. It is the most attractive quality we can possess.

Prīti (affection)



In the Gita Arjuna listens to all the advice given by Krishna and chooses his path because he wants to please him. His relationship with Krishna is based on love and Krishna has shared his knowledge with Arjuna because of this love. All of the principles we have mentioned are enriched by our ability to offer and receive affection. Love for God develops our kindness, our gratitude, and our concern. Our ability to be compassionate and tolerant is nourished by affection. Preaching is excellent when graced with a concern born of affection, and our affection for God should be apparent in all our dealings – as the quality of a rose is apparent by its scent.



*By Champakalata Dasi, Executive Member -
ISKCON Ministry of Education*

Devotees are always searching out a school where their children will benefit from a Krishna conscious education so that the values that are being imparted at home continue in their daily lives in their schooling experience. As association is fundamental to our moral and spiritual growth, devotee parents want the same for their children by way of ensuring that their peers at school and teachers are Krishna conscious.

To this end, communities have either already begun establishing private schools, incorporated Krishna conscious philosophy into their curriculum or want to set up Krishna conscious schools but don't know what to do to or how to achieve this goal.

The Ministry of Education has been developing guidelines to set up schools and to assess whether these schools meet the minimum standards expected of not just being an educational institution but also whether these schools maintain the

standards expected of a Vaisnava educational institution managed and promoted as an ISKCON affiliated school.

The Guidelines deal with essential requirements to obtain recognition and endorsement as an ISKCON affiliated school and provides basic information on various criteria for compliance such as governance and administration, admissions policy, requirements of academic and support staff, teaching qualifications, health and safety, codes of conduct and disciplinary procedures and naturally the inclusion of Srila Prabhupada's teachings into the academic curriculum.

The Ministry will systematically support, guide and assess schools to obtain the various tiers of endorsement which should be maintained and improved on a continuous basis.

Existing schools and those aspiring to establish schools are encouraged to communicate with Champakalata dasi (e-mail: champakalata@pamho.net) for further information and resources to join the endorsement programme and to be listed on the Ministry's database of schools.

ISKCON Mira Road temple (in Mumbai) has been enthusiastically engaging with the Ministry to establish a school and will serve as a prototype for the Ministry's pilot project which is being rolled out in 2020.

Pushing forward with Sankirtan at Goswami Academy



By Subhra Devi Dasi

Goswami Academy is a licensed early childhood and primary school serving at ISKCON Houston, Texas. Sweetly imbibing and

broadcasting the transcendental name, fame, forms, qualities and pastimes of the all-powerful, all knowledgeable, all wealthy, all renounced and all famous Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Sri Krishna to a diverse student population enrolled from both within the congregation and broader Houston community.

Sweet vibrations and echoes of "Hare Krishna" flood the hallways as the children, staff and parents enter the newly constructed school building. The children gently carry their offerings of fresh fruit and fragrant flowers to the meditation/ temple room at the far end of the hallway. Here, they greet Srila Prabhupada, and our Gaur- Nitai deities.



The students learn and offer daily prayers for (their parents, teachers, leaders, the ailing, and themselves). This way they learn empathy, compassion and respect among other integrated values including simplicity, tolerance, self-control, truthfulness, and humility.

The diverse student population attracts parents from within and from outside of the devotee community. The families are seeking alternative schools like ours with values, safe environment, nurturing relationships and vegetarian diets.

The new building facilities and services include;

- A Stem Lab
- Before and After school Care
- Multipurpose Utility Hall
- Spacious classrooms
- A Library
- Temple/ Meditation Room
- Yoga and Art Studio

At Goswami Academy, education means learning how to view the experience of life with spiritual insight. Children are taught how to love Krishna or God. Our inquiry- based curriculum also includes the academic subjects, study of scripture, Sanskrit, art, drama, music, and field trips. Children are placed at the center of this model where they

interact with five themes of Bhagavad Gita namely, Living Beings, Nature, God, Action and Time. Embedding spiritual values while meeting grade level academic standards. Education is not only for knowing the Supreme Lord and the nature of matter, but also for knowing oneself.

By understanding that each child is endowed with different natures, abilities, talents, and intelligence, our education system is designed to allow a child to develop his or her full potential.

Learners need knowledge, practice, and values that enable them to keep healthy in all areas, such as emotional, mental, and physical. Intellectual health involves practice in thinking critically and using logic appropriately. In addition children will live lives of ecological responsibility when they truly imbibe the realization that everything belongs to Krishna and must be used with respect in His service.

Field Trips to the Temple's Bhakti Urban Farm is a divine treat. Children bring their apples, carrots and bananas for our three beautiful cows, Mangala, Syamala and Vrinda. They beam with excitement and upon entering the farm the cows greet the children at the cars. The children also bring fruit and vegetable for the cows to school on a weekly

Pushing forward with Sankirtan at Goswami Academy

basis and learn about cow protection and agriculture.



The children learn that all of our activities can be transformed to please Krishna/ God. We can serve God in endless ways. We can write for Krishna, sing for Krishna, eat for Krishna, teach for Krishna, drive for Krishna, design buildings for Krishna, etc.

Excerpts of Parent Testimonials...

“The teachers welcome the children with open arms, in a warm, caring and patient manner. I feel comfortable leaving my young child at the school, knowing that it is a safe environment where my child is loved.”

*Charles Sharp
Parent of Pre-schooler*

“Kindness is a theme at Goswami Academy. From teachers to students, students to students and parents. What we do here is meaningful! I love that the school teaches values.”

*La Maudrie Shivers
Parent of Grade 2 and Pre-Schooler*

(Subhra devi dasi is the principal of Goswami Academy in Houston, Texas. She relocated from Northern California to ISKCON Houston, with her husband Chaitanya Caritamrta das, to head the school leaving her job as a principal in a public school. She has been involved in education for the past 24 years, serving as a teacher, vice principal and principal. She holds a degree in Primary Education and a Master's degree in Administration in Education. She has been blessed to come in contact with devotees in South Africa while studying at the University of Durban Westville, in South Africa in 1993. She completed her Bhakti Sastri Degree in 1998. In 1999, a month before getting married, she was initiated by His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami. She has taught Sunday School at ISKCON Silicon Valley in 2000-2001 and served as Secretary on the Temple Board. She assisted in helping coordinate the North American Education Conferences at ISKCON Houston in 2014- 2016)

Education and Sankirtan in Bahrain

By Abhirama Guru Dasa & Mangala Mathura Devi Dasi

ISKCON Bahrain is an unique model where the temple is run like any other ISKCON Temple – all the aartis, 3 times Bhoga offering, daily deity dressing etc. – however, all these are done by Grihastha devotees. Its more than 30 years that their Lordships Sri Sri Radha Baharinishwara, Sri Sri Gaur Nitai, Sri Krishna Balaram, Sri Prahlad Narsimha, Sri Jagannath, Baladev and Subhadraji.

This being a Grihastha run temple, in all the activities the whole family are involved. The parents render the service and children grow up seeing them and getting involved in them and later become exemplary devotees and serve the movement in various parts of the world.



Educational Programs

ISKCON Bahrain runs a gamut of educational and training programs for various groups of children. Starting from the children of the congregational devotees, training is extended to the whole society, i.e., children of Hindu families residing in Bahrain

1. Madhav Garden: A free weekly school developed as per the vision of His Holiness Jayapataka Swami and conceptualized by the help of Her Grace Urmila Mataji. Spiritual knowledge along with practical skills like art and craft comprise the syllabus. The school is open to children of devotees and outsiders as well and the classes finish with distribution of Temple *Prasadam*.

2. Little Gokul Workshop: to effectively utilize school vacations in devotion, a large number of children enroll in the Little Gokul Workshops. The workshops end with a grand program honoring the children and their parents and many parents have become regular devotees from this event.

3. Weekly *Bhagavad Gita* Classes are organized for children.

4. Various competitions are organized to encourage children practice devotional and practical skills like, *shloka recitation*, drawing, etc.

5. Youth classes are conducted for adolescent devotee children so as to dovetail their enthusiasm in Krishna's service and also to help them take major decisions in life based on the principles of previous *acaryas*.

6. Regular Mrdanga and Harmonium classes are held in collaboration with Mayapur Music Academy.

7. A certified Sanskrit course is conducted by a devotee teacher and the first batch of children recently passed the exams conducted by Sanskrit Bharati.

8. Visiting Maharajas, Prabhupada disciples and other devotees and authors take special class for children so as to give them a global perspective and also impart the stories of their personal interaction with Srila Prabhupada.

Practical teaching – hands on application

Teaching is most effective when the students are allowed to implement.

1. The temple organizes exclusive days for children where whole day's temple service from *mangal aarti* until the *Shayan aarti* are conducted by

children.

2. Gopal's class is a practicing ground for future preachers. Just before the weekly *Srimad Bhagavatam* classes, children are given an opportunity to deliver a lecture sitting in a regular *vyas asana*.

3. The grand annual Kirtan Mela also has its representation from children. Not only in singing, some children are actively involved in using their social media skills in promoting the event

4. His Holiness Jayapataka Swami Maharaj has been encouraging door to door campaigns during the Damodar month where devotee families visit upto 3 to 4 homes of other Hindu families and conduct short Kirtan, Damodar Katha and hand them over spiritual gift kits. After these programs have become a regular feature of ISKCON Bahrain, over the recent years children are seen taking the lead and conducting Damodar programs.

Special programs

To make the interest sustained, the temple also organizes special days filled with entertainment

1. Picnics
2. Family days
3. Sports
4. Competitions like shloka recitation, drawing competitions

Outcome/Achievement

The satisfaction lies in seeing the result. Srila Prabhupada would be pleased by seeing these results

1. Children as small as 4 to 5 years old have been noted leading kirtan, taking *Srimad Bhagavatam* and *Damodar* classes

2. Not only in devotional areas, ISKCON Bahrain trained children have excelled in various field of life

- Country topper in BrainOBrain
- Topper in television music competition in India

Education and Sankirtan in Bahrain

- Gained admission and leading in academics in various top colleges across the world
- Even though many of them have become highly qualified and capable doctors, engineers, CAs, pilots etc., they are practicing devotees, initiated and now a source of encouragement for the younger generation
- Many have become good artists, have created murals and posters for Krishna and now getting trained as architects and civil engineers hope to see them create a grand temple in the near future
- Young children have been seen to organize dramas – from script writing, to direction – this proves the leadership training and complete personality development under ISKCON Bahrain

To conclude, ISKCON Bahrain's training is now not limited to Bahrain. As these children have relocated to various places in India and the world, they are now leading college preaching cells, community preaching development and some of them are now leading Kirtanias and seen in almost all major Kirtan melas of the world.

The seed had been sown 30 years back by His Holiness Jayapataka Swami Maharaja in a desert and now a large oasis has developed with many sweet fruits which has added bliss to many families across the world.



(Abhirama Guru Das and Mangala Mathura Devi Dasi are from Durgapur, West Bengal and Mumbai, Maharashtra respectively. They have been residing in the GCC from the last 11 years and now a part of ISKCON Bahrain congregation for the last 6 years. While Abhirama Guru Das works as a healthcare manager, Mangala Mathura Devi Dasi serves as a servant teacher in the weekly Madhav Garden school and also conducting the devotional and school curriculum of their home schooled son Dhruva. Both of them are also involved in teaching Bhagavad Gita, Srimad Bhagavatam and Caitanya Caritamrita classes every week. They can be

From Darkness to Light

By Shyaam Sakhi, ISKCON Bahrain

*I came onto this earth with a cry hoping to find a source of happiness
No matter whatever I try, found nothing but distress
It felt like a dark and deep trap to which I was strongly bound
I just needed freedom from this deadly nap
and was too deep into thoughts, while I heard a gentle sound
Who could it be?
So loving, so kind
Has he come to set me free from this material bind
He lent me a magical book and told me to have a look
Taking it I shook my hand and finally had read
I finally had realized the truth and passed it onto those who are stuck
To help them out of this confusing maze
And take them back to Godhead with smile on their face*

About the Author: Shyaam Sakhi was born in 2005. She's the daughter of ISKCON Bahrain congregation members and preachers his grace Venkateswara Govinda das and her grace Sarvasri Madhavi Devi Dasi. Currently in grade 10 in Asian school Bahrain, she is learning Carnatic music and violin with a desire to serve Lord Gauranga in His Sankirtan movement.



By Tarini Radha Devi Dasi

It was feedback time at our annual Bhakta Prahlad Siksa Samaj (BPSS) program. The father of a ten year old girl took the mike and said, “My mother died recently. Seeing me very upset, my daughter told me, 'Appa, don't be sad. Grandmother is still there with us. Only the body is finished. She is eternal atma. She will always be with us'. I was amazed at how such a young child could speak such high philosophy. I thank ISKCON for the BPSS program”. This feedback was encouraging for all of us. Children easily grasp the simple philosophy of Bhagavad-gita and imbibe the activities of Bhakti-yoga without inhibitions. And when the children share it with their parents, the parents take it up naturally.

In Chennai, South India, we are fortunate. The people are pious. And they are keen that children get the same training in piety. ISKCON Chennai, from as early as 1990, had a program for children at the temple every Sunday. It was attended mostly by the children of devotees coming for the Sunday program. It was not a very fulfilling program because the attendance was not regular. Parents lived in different areas of the city, some far from the temple and could not come to the temple every week.

And then in the year 2000, we began the summer camp. With a syllabus covering the Dashavatar and 21 important slokas from the Bhagavad-gita, the camp ran for 21 days over 3 hours a day. Kids and teacher had great fun and at the end, the feedback requested for a whole month long camp. The camp was conducted the next year in two places with good attendance. Seeing this, H.H. Bhanu Swami Maharaj suggested having programs for children in more places of the city. Around this time, the

neighbourhood papers started rolling out facilitating publicity. By encouraging more members of the congregation to start children programs in their own homes, by sending official press release to the newspapers to promote participation, by providing precise teaching material and training, we could expand the BPSS program for children to 10 places in the city. Motivated by the ease in which the program could be done, more congregation devotees, came forward to do the service. Now, 19 years down the line, the BPSS program is held in 65 centers of the city with about 500 children attending the Krishna conscious program every week. 200 children join the annual summer camp.

How could we expand from 1 to 10 to 65 BPSS centres? While the congregation preaching expanded bringing in more devotees, most of the BPSS teachers are parents who came to enrol their children in the BPSS programs. Inspired by the positive changes in their children and by exposure to the Krishna conscious philosophy and program, many parents took up the path seriously. They in turn began children preaching in their houses. Still, we were dissatisfied that though we had more than fifty enthusiastic excellent teachers, there were hardly enough children attending the programs.

To take Krishna to where the children are, we started the school program. In about 30 schools, volunteers conduct a program of Bhajan, Mangalacharan, Hare Krishna Japa, Sloka, Story and Quiz. This program is successful in making over ten thousand children chant the mahamantra every week. We do not see now the full effect of this preaching. But surely there is some positive effect right now that the school authorities are continuing with the program over the last five years. At one



school, the authorities agreed so quickly to our request for permission to do the BPSS program that we were doubtful if they fully understood the program -- that we would chant Hare Krishna mantra. So when we went to double check, the Vice Principal said, "I know what you do. My son has attended the BPSS program". So that explained the matter. The children program was helping us do more programs for the children!

We understand that chanting Hare Krishna even once gives liberation from sins. Chanting Hare Krishna week after week, associating with

devotees, hearing Krishna Katha, singing songs of Krishna, remembering Krishna through craftwork and games, surely these children will hold aloft the sankirtan movement of Lord Chaitanya in the future by completely embracing Krishna consciousness, from the important positions they may enter into or by donating to the cause of Krishna consciousness. Preaching to children is a very easy and effective way of sankirtana. The adult ego may take a long time to budge into Krishna consciousness but the easily malleable child will pick it up easily and by his loving demands bring in his family.

Report from Board of Examinations (BoEx) meetings

The ISKCON Board of Examinations, along with other sastric educators, assembled together at ISKCON NOIDA, in October 2019, to discuss upgrading the current systematic sastric study certification standards. Team members present included, H.H. Hanumatpresak Swami, H.H. Yadunandan Swami, Prasanta Devi Dasi, Atul Krishna Das, Adi Purusa Das, Vamsivadan Das, Gauranga Darshan Das, Bala Govinda Das and Buddhimanta Dasa.

Srila Prabhupada wrote on 7 February, 1969, "With these examinations I wish to encourage all my disciples to very carefully learn this philosophy of Krishna Consciousness because there is so many preachers who will be required to bring this message to all of the corners of the earth..." Considering that less than 10% of all ISKCON centers are currently offering sastric degree certification programs, the team felt an enormous need to make programs more available.

In view of developments in global communication technology over the last two decades, the team felt that major shifts were required in the procedures for assessing and certifying sastric degree graduates. After 6 days of brainstorming and discussing the team came up with a revived system which includes refreshing and revolutionary new aspects.

Overview of the Revived Sastric Degree Certification System

- Full time campus Programs
Currently functioning in several centers globally.
- Online courses
Providing access to sastric study for those unable to attend campus study.
- Teach and Study Program
Particularly applicable to busy ISKCON leaders and preachers.
- Summative Assessment
For those who are regularly studying privately.
- Online Sastric Teacher Training
Particularly applicable to busy ISKCON leaders and preachers.

The team is regularly meeting to prepare an Assessment Question Bank which will function as the basic platform of standardization for the above listed study options. The above mentioned changes in the sastric degree certification program are expected to be implemented within 2 years.

Calendar of Events

Jan 17th - 20th, 2020: Bhaktivedanta Medical Association 6th Annual Conference, ISKCON Houston, Texas. Please visit <https://www.facebook.com/ISKCONBMA/> for updates.

Feb 14th - 20th, 2020: ISKCON Leadership Sanga, Mayapur. Please visit www.ilsglobal.org for more details. You can get to meet many educators & leaders around the world and get to know more about various preaching initiatives.

Feb 21st & 22nd, 2020: Second International Symposium organised by Ministry of Education in Sridham Mayapur. Please contact viplavah.iskcon@gmail.com if you are interested in being part of the event.

Ministry of Education - Online Survey

Dear ISKCON educator and leader.

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

The Ministry of Education is undertaking an educational census among the educators and leadership of ISKCON to determine our current scope of activities and future needs of the members. The output of the census would allow us to put forward plans for developing stronger educational systems and programs within ISKCON to cater to such needs of the members.

We are hopeful that this small step will help us fulfil the desire of His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada for education within ISKCON. This Google form survey should take only 15 min of your time.

Preferred completion time: 25th January 2020

Link to the survey: <https://forms.gle/86BbZwLSiuJvjQwBA>

Note: For best viewing, we recommend using Google Chrome. Other browsers could also be used with proper Zoom (magnification level) for optimal viewing. Here is a link for adjusting the same - <https://help.smartsheet.com/articles/506736-browser-zoom>

We look forward to your participation and we sincerely appreciate the time you take out to share your views. Should you have any specific query or need assistance, you may please reach out to Chetan Prabhu at chazaree@gmail.com

Thank you. Hare Krishna.

Your servant,

Tapana Mishra dasa

Executive Director

ISKCON, Ministry of Education

Next Issue

In our next issue (March 2020), we will discuss various new educational initiatives that are being undertaken within Ministry of Education viz. New Online courses, New resources for different education initiatives, new guidelines / policies for our own education institutions etc. are being rolled out. Different teams of devotees are working on these projects and we shall update about the progress of them. Stay tuned.



Announcements



- ISKCON Ministry of Education is looking for volunteers for different projects. If you have inclination to serve in the Education-related services feel free to contact us at viplavah.iskcon@gmail.com
- If you are interested in writing about your project / services to the larger community of ISKCON or if you are interested in sharing your experiences about the education services you rendered please feel free to write to us at viplavah.iskcon@gmail.com. We will be happy to review them and publish in our upcoming issues.
- If you are in a leadership role or looking forward for a leadership role and are interested in extending some services for the Ministry of Education, please write to us with your short bio and also a reference about you from the local GBC / Temple authorities. We are looking for Regional Representatives for different zones around the world. We currently have regional reps for India, Bangladesh, North America, Russia, China, some parts of South America etc. We definitely want to serve all the devotees globally and looking for regional reps who can liaise with the ministry and help us reach to larger devotee community. Selection of the candidate is at the discretion of the Executive Committee of Ministry of Education.



**Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare**

